

February 28, 2019

Senator Cohen and Representative Demicco
Environment Committee, Co-Chairs
Legislative Office Building, Room 3200
Hartford, CT 06106

RE: Proposed House Bill No. 6637 - AN ACT REQUIRING AN INVASIVE SPECIES STAMP FOR THE OPERATION OF A MOTORBOAT ON THE INLAND WATERS OF THE STATE

Dear Senator Cohen and Representative Demicco:

My name is Felicia Tencza and my husband and I own property in East Haddam at Lake Hayward. I am also Co-Facilitator of the East Haddam Lakes Association and former Chair of the Lake Hayward Lake Quality Improvement Committee

I wish to thank the Environment Committee and the sponsors of Proposed House Bill No. 6637. I greatly appreciate the interest demonstrated by you in support of not only the CT Lakes community, but also the significant financial and recreational benefits generated by the lakes for Connecticut.

I write in **STRONG support** of HB No. 6637 and the substitute language the Connecticut Federation of Lakes will provide. The modest user-fee based approach is both affordable and appropriate.

There are numerous reasons why we need to do all we can to remediate Aquatic Invasive Species, some of which are:

- Aquatic invasive species are increasingly impacting water quality, recreational use, environmental health and waterfront and lake zone property values associated with Connecticut water bodies. Income of thousands of local merchants statewide, and revenue of local municipalities, are negatively impacted (proven by many studies, including one by UConn) if water quality deteriorates.
- The recent appearance of Hydrilla in the CT River and Coventry Lake poses a severe threat that is in addition to growing problems from water chestnut, fanwort, milfoil, zebra mussels, toxic algae, etc.
- State agencies, municipalities, and lake authorities lack the resources to address this growing threat. Funding and staffing for invasive species prevention and control have been lost coincident with increasing damage and risk.
- Boats are the most common vector of transferring aquatic invasive species from lake to lake. This is supported by research.

- Millions are already being spent each year in CT to control milfoil, fanwort, water chestnut, toxic algae, phragmites, and other aquatic invasive plants.

We need to get ahead of this problem with effective prevention, education, and control and we need to act now!!!

The support HB 6637 is critical ... we ask YOU and each member of the Legislature to support this bill.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Felicia Tencza

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East Haddam, CT 06423

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copy: Senator Norm Needleman, 33rd Senate District

Representative Irene Haines, 34th House District